

CONCERT ORGANIZATION: A SUMMARY

Basics

- * **Stage Manager** is supreme boss
- * Contact artists well before the concert for technical details and needs
- * Arrange availability of any special requirements
- * Coordinate necessary equipment for rehearsals
- * If possible, attend rehearsals to confirm details

Draft Program

- * Consider the theme/philosophy of concert
- * Practicalities: consistent programming; length of programme; variety; performers available?; special equipment available?
- * Where's the money coming from?: government sources; private enterprise; large institutions...
- * Confirm budget: income and expenditure
- * Confirm program: copyright issues (APRA); details (name of work, composer, duration, instrumentation) NB composer commissions (due date of completion, which might not be met)
- * Confirm artists: phone them; contracts; lists (name, address, phone number, instrument, agreed fee, works in which they're involved)

Booking of the Venue

- * Is it consistent with the concert theme?
- * Likely size of audience; to be correlated with capacity of venue
- * Cost of venue, including peripherals such as recording; facilities included in cost
- * Confirm booking: letter to venue; contract; technical requirements
- * Develop good rapport with venue personnel

Publicity

- * Types: posters; brochures; handbills (dodgers/flyers); e-mail, the WWW and Internet
- * Considerations: poster and program booklet design (paper-type and -size, logos, colour?, typeface, photographs and images); information (name of event, groups(s) and performer(s), name of work(s) and composer(s), date(s) and commencement time, venue, ticket cost and how to get them, phone number for further enquiries)
- * Use of the back of the handbill: previous reviews of group; brief CVs of players; booking form and return address; other relevant information
- * Distribution of publicity material: analyse potential audience; hunt out and build up a mailing list thence forward brochures; radio (free!, interviews); TV (expensive, interviews only); e-mail and Internet; press release (gig guide etc., articles, interviews, critiques, check out copy deadlines and costs)

Rehearsal schedules

- * Call first rehearsal and sight-read through material; give out rehearsal schedules
- * List: date, time and venue for concert; list performers, their instrument and phone number; also that of stage manager/director; list all rehearsals, works to be rehearsed, who's involved; show all technical calls and dress rehearsals

Front-of-House requirements

- * Check up on: placement of ushers, programme sellers; cloakroom availability; when latecomers may enter
- * Let the Front-of-House manager know the beginning time, interval time and length, and the finishing time of the event
- * Confirm: availability of food/drink during interval; Front-of-House to clear Stage Manager before concert begins; that ticket sellers know prices, complimentaries, etc.

Technical rehearsal

- * Check: lighting requirements; sound system (if any); keyboard requirements (tuning (when?), A440 or A415?), stools, stick/lid height, page turner, etc.)
- * Confirm: whether concert is to be recorded and by whom; that the sound engineer has a score of relevant works; the number of chairs and music-stands required, and any special requirements; artists' car-parking needs for concert

Final rehearsal, coordinating technical and programme demands

- * Phone everybody on the day, and ensure that dressing rooms have been arranged
- * Arrange for early admittance to venue for those who need it (percussionists, sound engineers ...)
- * Run the programme through in order, and also rehearse encores (if applicable)
- * Confirm: balance for recording; room acoustics (lay carpet under players as necessary); the distribution of complimentary tickets
- * Check with artists: their order moving onto stage; dress for concert; where they can tune up

After the concert

- * Collect all parts and performance materials!
- * Remove equipment and let management know when the rest of the set-up will be removed
- * *Leave the venue as it was found!!!*
- * Pay all outstanding accounts
- * Return all borrowed gear and return music to hirer (if applicable)
- * Follow up on recordings: copies of concert recordings to all relevant people (composer, performers, bureaucrats ...)
- * Thank-you letter to those who assisted; acknowledgements can also be made in a printed programme
- * Now the *real bullshit* starts: reports on "success" and "excellence" blah-blah-blah to arts funding bodies and other assorted parasitic bureaucracies and atmospherocephalics...